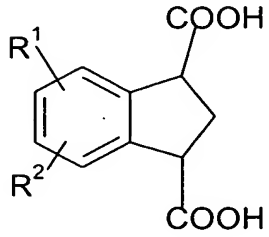
We Claim:

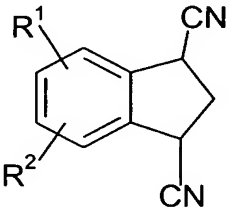
1. A process for the preparation of compounds having the formula



I

wherein R^1 and R^2 are selected independently from hydrogen, C_1-C_5 alkyl, C_1-C_5 alkoxy, trifluoromethyl, halogen, sulfonyl alkyl, alkylamino, amide, ester, aryl-alkyl, heteroalkyl, and arylalkoxy

comprising hydrolyzing a compound of formula



II

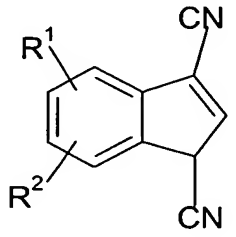
in the presence of an acid or base catalyst.

wherein R^1 and R^2 are selected independently from hydrogen, C_1-C_5 alkyl, C_1-C_5 alkoxy, trifluoromethyl, halogen, sulfonyl alkyl, alkylamino, amide, ester, aryl-alkyl, heteroalkyl, and arylalkoxy

2. The process according to claim 1 wherein said catalyst is an acid catalyst comprising a mixture of glacial acetic acid and concentrated hydrochloric acid.

3. The process according to claim 1 wherein said compound is indan –1,3-dicarboxylic acid.

4. The process according to claim 1 wherein said compound of formula II is prepared by reacting a compound of the formula

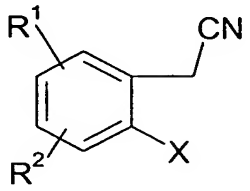


III

with hydrogen in the presence of a hydrogenation catalyst, wherein R^1 and R^2 are independently selected from hydrogen and C_1-C_6 alkyl, trifluoromethyl, halogen, sulfonyl alkyl, alkylamino, amide, ester, aryl-alkyl, heteroalkyl, and arylalkoxy

5. The process according to claim 4, wherein said hydrogenation catalyst is palladium on carbon.

6. The process of claim 4 wherein a compound of formula III is prepared by reacting a compound of the formula



IV

with 3-ethoxyacrylonitrile in the presence of a catalyst comprising tricyclohexylphosphine, palladium II acetate, and a base in a water miscible organic solvent,

wherein R^1 and R^2 are independently selected from hydrogen, C_1-C_5 alkyl, C_1-C_5 alkoxy, trifluoromethyl, halogen, sulfonyl alkyl, alkylamino, amide, ester, aryl-alkyl, heteroalkyl, and arylalkoxy and X selected from the group consisting of chlorine, bromine, or iodine.

7. The process according to claim 6 wherein said base is sodium t-butoxide.

8. The process according to claim 6 wherein said water miscible solvent is tetrahydrofuran.

9. The process according to claim 5, wherein said hydrogenation catalyst is 5% palladium on carbon.

10. The process according to claim 1, wherein said catalyst is a base catalyst selected from the group consisting of Group I metal alkoxides, sodium hydroxide, lithium hydroxide, and potassium hydroxide.